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OPERATION MONGOOSE

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

30 March 1962

EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Special Group (Augmented) Meeting
on Operation Mongoose, 29 March

Present: Mr. McGeorge Bundy, Mr. Robert Kennedy, Mr. Alexis Johnson, Mr. Paul Nitze, Mr. John McCone, Mr. Donald Wilson, General T. W. Parker, General Edward G. Lansdale.

The Group was informed of the contents of the attached memorandum recording a 28 March meeting of the operational representatives. General Lansdale pointed out that the psychological activities were within existing policy and would be developed as indicated. The "food for prisoners" proposal was presented as requiring policy approval.

Mr. Wilson noted that a press statement had not been issued since none of the families in the Miami area had been reported as planning to return to Cuba. Mr. Johnson said that State had not made the decision, as reported. Mr. Kennedy commented that the decision was made in a strange way, since he had agreed to I&NS permitting re-entry upon State's representation to him that the action was ready to go, except for that permission.

General Lansdale alerted the Group, for the particular attention of the FBI and CIA, that the situation among refugees in southern Florida was explosive, that undetected Communist agents among the refugees there could turn emotional demonstrations into riots very damaging to the U.S.

On "food for prisoners," the Group decided that State would explore promptly the possibility of a 3rd country ambassador approaching Castro privately on behalf of private relief agencies, the legality of using PL 480 surplus foods for this purpose, and the private relief organizations which would undertake such a delivery.

General Lansdale then reported that two USAF aircraft and crews had been readied for air re-supply missions, although no such mission

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was yet requested. Mr. McCone stated that he was not informed as yet on the CIA readiness to supply non-U.S. crews. General Lansdale stated that the Air Force offered to train personnel and run the air operation completely for CIA. Mr. Kennedy commented that, if it were decided to have USAF personnel aboard, it would be better to have them in uniform rather than "sheep-dipped;" they could claim they lost their way en route to Guantanamo.

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E G Lansdale
EDWARD G. LANSDALE
Brigadier General, USAF

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